Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

2014 ODA Accessibility Plan

ISBN 1918-6029

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 3

Introduction 4

Section One: Report on Measures Taken by Ministry in 2014 6

OPS MYAP Key Outcome 6

Measures Taken in 2014 6

MYAP Key Outcome: 7

Measures Taken in 2014 7

MYAP Key Outcome 8

Measures Taken in 2014 8

MYAP Key Outcome 9

Measures Taken in 2014 9

MYAP Key Outcome 10

Measures Taken in 2014 10

Section Two: Report on Measures Proposed by Ministry for 2015 & 2016 12

OPS MYAP Key Outcomes 12

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016 12

MYAP Key Outcome 13

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016 13

MYAP Key Outcome 14

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016 14

MYAP Key Outcome 15

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016 15

MYAP Key Outcome 16

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016 16

Section Three: Addressing the Identification of Barriers 17

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms 18

Links 19

Contact Us 20

Attachment - MYAP Deliverables 21

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (the ministry or the MAA) is committed to ensuring that information and services are provided in a manner that presents no barriers to Ontarians with disabilities.

This means ensuring that all public meetings hosted by the ministry are accessible for persons with disabilities including providing communication supports as needed; it means going the extra mile in responding to individual client needs by including accessibility in all customer service encounters; and it means supporting employees with disabilities throughout their employment with the ministry.

Our services would not be possible without the knowledgeable and dedicated employees whom we attract. We support every employee in reaching his or her full potential by ensuring that those with disabilities receive the accommodation they need to pursue fulfilling careers. We support individuals with disabilities through the hiring process as well as those who develop a disability while working for the ministry. In addition, all staff receive the necessary training to better understand their rights and obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Introduction

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA), ministries are required to produce, and make available to the public, annual plans that identify how ministries will identify and remove barriers to accessibility.

The ODA Accessibility Plan (the Plan) is an opportunity to showcase our ministry's accomplishments and to demonstrate how we are modeling compliance with our regulated accessibility requirements.

In 2010, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) began complying with the first accessibility standard established under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. In 2011, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was introduced, establishing phased-in requirements in the following accessibility standards:

- Information and Communications;
- Employment;
- Transportation; and
- Design of Public Spaces.

Each year, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) as an obligated organization, confirms its compliance with the requirements of these standards to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. The ODA Plan provides an opportunity for our ministry to go beyond confirming compliance with these regulated minimum requirements. Specifically, the Plan allows us to highlight the measures taken by our ministry to identify and remove barriers in the previous year while proposing measures for the coming years that will make our ministry more accessible.

The IASR establishes that obligated organizations, shall create and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP) that outlines the organization's strategies to prevent and

remove barriers to accessibility. To meet the MYAP requirement, the OPS released Leading the Way Forward in 2012.

Organizations are also required to develop an annual status report that highlights progress in advancing the MYAP strategy and in meeting the requirements of the IASR. In 2013, the OPS released its first Annual Status Report, highlighting progress made in 2012.

The MAA's 2014 ODA Plan demonstrates how the measures the ministry has taken and the measures we propose for the coming years support the key outcomes and deliverables of the MYAP.

To access the MAA's and other ministries' 2014 ODA Accessibility Plans, visit Ontario.ca.

Section One: Report on Measures Taken by Ministry in 2014

Customer Service

OPS MYAP Key Outcome

People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

Measures Taken in 2014

- All new regular and fixed-term staff received the necessary training within two weeks of their start date to meet the requirements specified in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS) Regulation. In addition to the online modules for staff, the training was offered in alternate formats as necessary (e.g., paper copy, CD, or by telephone).
- This year, the MAA's public-facing website migrated to Ontario's new One Site platform (ontario.ca), the public's one window destination for online information and services delivered by all provincial ministries. As such, the ministry continued to meet the standard for barrier-free information and services for people with disabilities by providing critical information on aboriginal people / issues in accessible formats.
- The MAA's Communications Branch continued its practice and commitment to responding to all feedback received about accessibility in a timely manner.
- The MAA collaborated with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to ensure that TTY service was made available on behalf of MAA, through MNRF's Natural Resources Information Centre.
- It is the MAA's practice to ensure that notices are in place if and when services are disrupted and to ask clients with a disability how we can accommodate their needs.
- The MAA's Accessibility Lead advised program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities were considered up front in the planning process.

- Meetings were held in venues that are barrier-free for people with disabilities, and were carried out with accessibility in mind, for example, using teleconference and other telephone aids as requested.
- New managers were required to take "Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity." All managers were strongly encouraged to take online "Using the OPS Inclusion Lens" training.
- The MAA continued to implement the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the ASCS.

Information and Communications

MYAP Key Outcome:

Information and communication materials are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

Measures Taken in 2014

- Staff took persons with disabilities into consideration when planning public meetings. For example, all of the venues used for the public information sessions for the Algonquin land claim held across eastern Ontario, were accessible to persons with disabilities. Ministry staff were available at these sessions to accommodate visitors with disabilities and to provide documents in alternate formats upon request.
- The First Nations and Treaties map was posted on the government website in an accessible PDF format.
- All new websites, including OneSite and internal websites, conform with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA, which exclude live captions and audio descriptions.
- The accessibility resources section on the internal website was updated to assist staff in locating new information, guidelines and tools; the website is continually reviewed to ensure up-to-date content that keeps pace with OPS initiatives.

- E-learning videos and other resources from the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign, on how to create accessible documents and other topics related to the IASR were promoted. This information was communicated directly to staff through a memorandum.
- The Communications Branch ensured that accessibility was considered early in the planning process for information products and other communication materials, as described in the OPS Inclusion Lens.
- Staff prepared responses to public requests for publications in accessible formats according to the OPS guidelines.
- Accessibility criteria were considered when planning procurement activities, as required by the Management Board of Cabinet's Procurement Directive..

Employment

MYAP Key Outcome

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

Measures Taken in 2014

As an employer, the MAA works to attract and retain talented employees including those with disabilities; actively offering accommodation as required during the recruitment process and assists employees who request employment accommodation. The MAA continues to support employees throughout their careers relative to performance management, career development and redeployment.

Specifically, the accessibility requirements as an employer were met in the following areas:

- Recruitment processes;
- Employee accommodation and supports;
- Accommodation for employees returning to work after an extended absence;
- Accommodating employees relative to performance management, career development and redeployment;

- Ensuring mandatory training was observed by all managers and staff;
- Communicating with staff and managers on the new IASR Employment Standard and the Information and Communications Supports Standard to ensure they understand their role and the training requirements;
- Established performance commitments on inclusion (which includes accessibility) in all managers' and executives' performance plans;
- Promotion of the OPS policy on preventing barriers in employment through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign on OPS policies, practices and resources;
- Increased manager awareness of employment accommodation for employees with disabilities through promoting the OPS "Healthy Workplace Healthy Mind" program within the ministry, and hosting webcasts on site; and
- In the 2014 OPS employee survey, staff were asked if their accommodations needs were met.

Built Environment

MYAP Key Outcome

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

Measures Taken in 2014

- As tenants of 160 Bloor Street in Toronto, the MAA consulted with the facility's property management on any alterations; this ensured that ministry and employee needs were addressed and any alterations were designed to provide barrier-free access according to the Ontario Building Code.
- The MAA made special provision of a rest facility for employees with health conditions.
- Emergency evacuation and emergency response plans are in place to ensure staff understand accessibility requirements of their building and that those who have identified a need with respect to mobility requirements are accommodated.

Other Commitments

MYAP Key Outcome

OPS staff are able to identify barriers to accessibility, in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

Measures Taken in 2014

Procurement

Supported by the tools and templates provided by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) Supply Chain Ontario (SCO) and Management Board of Cabinet Procurement Directive – 2014, the ministry:

- Included accessibility considerations in its procurement and evaluation practices, consistent with the SCO and Guidelines for Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement; incorporated accessibility considerations in procurement planning and included accessibility criteria in documentation.
- Considered accessibility for persons with disabilities in all goods or services purchased for the use of the ministry, its employees or the public. For example, all of the venues chosen for the public information sessions for the Algonquin land claim were accessible for persons with disabilities.

Accessibility Feedback

- Provided mechanisms for the public to provide feedback through a range of communication avenues:
    - Electronic contact through the MAA internet site;
    - Telephone contact in partnership with the MNRF, through the Natural Resources Information Centre (NRIC), including TTY;
    - Contact by correspondence through postal services and facsimile; and
    - Encouraged feedback from clients and participants of consultation sessions and workshops.

- The MAA is prepared to respond in a timely and respectful manner to feedback received on accessibility matters, in accordance with the OPS Common Service Standards (e.g., within two days for online correspondence).

OPS Inclusion Lens

- Required all staff to include in their annual learning plans the OPS Inclusion Lens online course.
- Encouraged staff to use the OPS Inclusion Lens as part of their normal business when reviewing or developing legislation, policies, programs, practices or services; this was supported through a Deputy Minister blog about inclusion. Staff continued to use it in policy development and planning to identify and remove potential barriers to persons with disabilities.

Section Two: Report on Measures Proposed by Ministry for 2015 & 2016

Customer Service

OPS MYAP Key Outcomes

People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016

- Accessibility criteria (OPS Inclusion Lens) to be part of decision-making processes and project management.
- By December 31, 2015, all ministry web content (public-facing) will conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (except live captions and audio descriptions).
- All new staff will continue to receive the required customer service standards training within two weeks of their start date.
- Continue to implement the service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ASCS.
- Staff will provide appropriate responses to all customer feedback related to accessibility.
- The MAA's Accessibility Lead will continue to advise program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered up front.
- Provide resources to all staff on planning and delivering accessible meetings and promote usage of these resources by adding an "accessibility considered" check-box to meeting notes and event plans.

Information and Communications

MYAP Key Outcome

Information and communication materials are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016

- Continue to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard (except live captions and audio descriptions) for internet and new content on intranet.
- Continue to use accessible formats and templates based on OPS Accessibility Centre of Excellence best practices for communication materials and documents.
- Staff will be encouraged to attend OPS and ministry training sessions on creating accessible documents through corporate email communication and intranet updates.
- Train staff on ministry protocols and the procurement process when arranging for communication supports as part of hosting accessible events.
- Continue to support the MAA accessibility lead to participate in OPS accessibility forums, networks and training.
- Promote the OPS policy on preventing barriers in employment and increase general staff awareness through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign and the Mission Possible series of training videos (from the OPS Centre for Leadership and Learning and the OPS Diversity Office) and Accessibility Centre of Excellence tutorials on creating accessible documents.
- Continue to work with both the Ministry Accessibility Lead and the Communications Branch to ensure all key data products, including 133 First Nation Community Profiles, are available in accessible formats.

Employment

MYAP Key Outcome

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016

- Increase manager awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies and plans through supporting OPS-led awareness initiatives to ensure employees with disabilities can participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.
- Ensure that managers understand how to make accessible formats and communication supports available for employees to ensure all employees can participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.
- Include performance commitments on inclusion (which includes accessibility) for all managers and executives.
- Analyse the 2014 employee survey results to identify potential barriers to employees with disabilities and establish a plan to address any potential employment barriers revealed as a result of this analysis.
- Ensure managers review the recruitment practices to ensure that accessibility is considered for all candidates, and address any barriers identified as a result.
- Follow up regularly at Senior Management Committee on employment accommodation requests and issues (while maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of the individuals).
- Provide regular communication to staff and management on the resources available on employment accommodation and where to find them.
- Make information and resources available to all new employees on the process for accommodation, as part of their orientation.
- New managers will continue to take the following online courses: Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity; IASR – Employment Standards.

- Continue to provide links on the ministry's intranet site to HRO (Human Resources Ontario) information about employee accommodation and return-to-work and provide a one-window contact for advice/support.

Built Environment

MYAP Key Outcome

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016

Government Facilities

- The MAA is committed to greater accessibility within and around the buildings and public spaces it occupies.
- All planned facility alterations, improvement projects and any new construction are designed and implemented in compliance with the Ontario Infrastructure (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Government Facilities.
- Consider vision disabilities in plans to improve fourth floor reception area and other public or meeting spaces at 160 Bloor Street.

Accessible Barrier-free Design in Buildings and Public Spaces

- Through OPS Built Environment Training and Awareness, increase manager awareness of:
    - Design of Public Spaces Standards of the AODA;
    - Barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code; and
    - Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Government Facilities.
- Ensure that managers whose duties are directly impacted by the Built Environment Standard take the training described above.

- Investigate the opportunity with building management for a single-stall, accessible washroom on the ninth floor and increased accessibility of the fourth floor washrooms at our main office at 160 Bloor Street.
- Work with the building management and Infrastructure Ontario to ensure all physical changes to office space at the MAA comply with barrier-free design (e.g., increasing boardroom accessibility, construction of smudging and ceremonial room).

Other Deliverables

MYAP Key Outcome

OPS staff are able to identify barriers to accessibility in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

Measures Proposed for 2015 & 2016

- The MAA to regularly make use of the OPS Inclusion Lens to ensure policies, programs and processes are free of barriers for persons with disabilities.
- Increase staff awareness of mental illness in the workplace by promoting OPS resources and program initiatives.
- Offer "Mental Health in the Workplace" courses at the staff and management levels.
- Ensure healthy-choice foods at meetings and negotiations in consideration of a range of health conditions. For example, the MAA currently avoids nuts due to severe allergies in some staff and visitors; the MAA will consider providing other food options (e.g., for those with diabetes, Celiac disease, etc.).
- An internal Inclusion Council has been formed and will assist the ministry in advancing *"Towards Inclusion, MAA's Inclusion Strategic Plan 2013-16"*, including commitments related to accessibility.

Section Three: Addressing the Identification of Barriers

In support of MAA's commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the MAA will continue to review government initiatives including Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services for the purposes of identifying and removing barriers.

The ministry is responsible for two pieces of legislation. We will continue using the OPS Inclusion Lens to identify potential barriers to people with disabilities in consultation with legal counsel.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

ACOE- Accessibility Centre of Excellence

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ASCS – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

HRO- Human Resources Ontario

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

MAA – Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

MGCS – Ministry of Government and Consumer Services

MNRF – Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

SCO – Supply Chain Ontario

TTY – Telephone Typewriter or Telecommunication Device for those with hearing impairment

WCAG – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Links

OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan - Leading the Way Forward,

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Ontario Accessibility Website

Accessible, Fair and Sustainable Services for People with Developmental Disabilities program

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Contact Us

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are welcome.

General inquiries: 416-326-4740 (Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, except statutory holidays)

TTY number: 1-866-686-6072

Toll-free number: 1-866-381-5337

Email: public.maa@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: www.ontario.ca/aboriginal

Visit the **Ministry of Economic, Development, Trade and Employment** web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request from:

ServiceOntario Publications

Phone: 1-800-668-9938

TTY: 1-800-268-7095

© 2013 Queen's Printer for Ontario

ISSN 1918-6029

Ce document est disponible en français.

Attachment - MYAP Deliverables

2014-2016
Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices, Accessibility is part of all OPS business.
Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices. Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented. Better accommodation for employees with disabilities resulting from management review. Accessibility Expo continues annually.
Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment. Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments. Staff and customer feedback sought on accessibility innovations and improvements.
OPS ready to implement requirements of AODA built environment regulation.